

# How Can I Protect The Product of My Creativity?

When we get inspired and have an original thought about something, we often worry about having our idea copied before we can commercially exploit it.

Are there any avenues available to protect our ideas? Yes, of course! The branch of law known as Intellectual Property promises to do precisely that. In the United States, there are 3 basic categories where the products of our creative mind can be protected, namely Copyright, Trademarks and Patents.

Each category tries to protect a different class of the efforts of our imagination and innovation. Basically, Copyright protect original methods of expression, Trademarks protect logos, designs and other identifying marks of a business while Patent protect new inventions.

Take for example, the law relating to Patents. If you have come up with a new method of manufacturing something or a new process of doing something, then it might be wise to get it patented before making it public. By doing so, you would be able to enjoy some legal protection should your idea be copied by others.

Since the process of getting a patent is dictated by the relevant law in individual countries, it must be remembered that getting a patent in one country does not grant you any legal protection in another country. In other words, you have to make a [patent application](#) in each of the countries you are seeking legal protection.

As the process is prescribed by law, it is often a very technical and tedious process so although an individual might file for a patent himself, it is usually more cost effective to engage the services of a patent attorney to avoid delays and expedite the process.

One of the first steps which should be taken is to make a [patent search](#). If you decide to go the solo route, a good resource to use is the United States Patent and Trademark Office (aka USPTO) website where you can not only find relevant advice but it is also obviously the main database where you can use to do your search.

However, since information in the database only relates to applications which have been granted patents, don't assume that if there is no similar entries in the database, your application would be successful, hence the need to get a really experienced patent attorney to handle your application if you want to be assured of the highest chances of success.

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